

TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION  
TENANT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING  
OCTOBER 5, 2023

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WRITTEN DEPUTATIONS

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**TSC MEETING OCTOBER 5, 2023**

**C. Wilkinson, Deputation**

**Item 5. ACTION ITEM LIST**

**ITEM #1. Participatory Budgeting Program - TARGET DATE:**

*“To be brought back in advance of program being re-introduced”.*

The PB program is important to tenants because it gives them an opportunity to present a priority item for their community to their peers in hopes of receiving enough votes to get their item approved.

The *Participatory Budgeting program was “paused” in 2020*, to undertake a fulsome review and more recently a request to rename the program that more accurately describes its purpose.

In 2022 management *extended the “pause” of PB program review* due to needs arising in Swansea Mews.

The PB program has been “on hold” for 3 years.

The review including tenant consultations was to take place Q3/23, this did not take place, with a final report to the Board in Q1/24.

With implementation of the program between Q2 to Q4 in 2024.

The last PB Budget was \$5M, we know the 2024 Budget will be coming to the Board in the next month or so.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

I would ask the Committee to determine if funding has been ear marked for the PB program in 2024, or if the program is being delayed another year.

Thank you for your consideration.

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**C. Wilkinson, Deputation**

**Item 7. OCHE BI-ANNUAL UPDATE**

With Service Hubs located inside TCH buildings or in close proximity, this actually made it easier for TSCs to make direct personal contact with tenants. I'm not sure why TSCs did not attempt to make personal contact with tenants in arrears 64% of the time Q1/Q2.

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Third bullet: With the HUB model, TSCs workload demand is varied and complex which affects their ability to fulfil their obligations.

At some point, we are going to have to deal with the elephant in the room, the creation of Service Hubs were well intended, but have fallen short on delivery of tenant facing services.

In former OU offices, there was a Front Desk Clerk who acted as Intake for all tenants and visitors to the office.

With the Hub Model – the TSC has essentially become the Hub Receptionist, on a much bigger scale than OU Offices because this now includes complaints, maintenance requests, cleaning needs, assisting contractors all while trying to do their actual job of Annual Rent Reviews, managing arrears and handling tenancy management issues.

We envisioned our labour partners would “job share” and “take turns” sitting at the front desk.

I have to admit, I actually laughed when a senior staff person told me how the Service Hubs would operate. Unfortunately, TSCs drew the short straw as the Superintendent and custodian are not physically in the office 90% of the time because they are doing their jobs: repairs,

dealing with contractors and building cleaning. This potentially creates a safety concern for TSCs being left alone in the office.

On the contrary, Service Hubs are not really “open for business”. The door is locked, access is only permitted by staff. Tenants need to make an appt or; if they are lucky enough, to see a staff person in the office.

Although staff work regular business hours, there is no specific hours the Service Hubs are open for walk in tenants.

TSCs already have Tenancy Managers with each region. Of note, tenants have no idea who that Manager is should they wish to escalate a concern regarding their tenancy. I support the need to create a centralized Manager of Tenancy Management who can focus specifically on arrears and other issues arising within the Regions.

We can create all the KPIs we want, but two things must happen:

- 1) Identify TSCs that are not in compliance with the ACP, address their concerns and hold them accountable

and;

- 2) Evaluate the need to hire Front Desk Clerks in Hubs, even if it's only a couple days a week and commit to a time when walk in tenants can be served and budget for this accordingly.

Thank you for your consideration.

Deputation – Ann-Marie Tomlinson  
Item 8A – Tenant Complaints Update  
TSC Public Meeting – October 5, 2023

## Deputations Item 8A

What I think should be added

In the best interest of the tenants and their well-being, and in fairness and transparency

1. tenants complaint process is about what occurred with staff, these are some added areas that we may want to look at:

Antisocial behaviour in Staff

2. no transparency, with staff

3. No bullying and intimidation, we must have transparency, so important for trust with tenants.

4. What actions will happen to staff?

5. Wrong information on documents from staff How do you correct this.

6. Not following Tchc processes and procedures how do we change this?

7. Modified living for tenants who are injured.

No access to support, how do we change this? Tenants complain about this issue.

At the end of the day tenants need support they need to feel heard. And they need to feel important and safe and that fairness is a reality.

Thanks

Ann-Marie Rep duncanwoods community

## **TSC MEETING – OCTOBER 5, 2023**

C. Wilkinson, Deputation

### **ITEM #8A. TENANT COMPLAINTS UPDATE**

Our data system HoMES contains personal information on tenants. There are restrictions on who has access to Tenant files. Careful consideration of privacy concerns, could be a potential bias in decision making when responding to tenant complaints after looking at their Tenant Profile on HoMES.

Not the first time I've heard, "**review of complaints by tenant led groups**". If I am interpreting that correctly, I actually don't think tenants should be involved in reviewing tenant complaints, as this is an operations function.

Given the recent Ombudsman's Report, the Solutions Team does not have Human Rights expertise and may not be able to identify a Human Rights Complaint.

Staff List in communities identify site-staff only.

Tenants do not know who the Supervisors and Managers are of Site Staff if they want to escalate a concern at the local level.

Maintenance Issues should go through the appropriate levels of staff, where they can potentially be resolved much quicker if Tenants knew who the Supervisors and Managers were.

Although this information is posted on the website, not everyone has or will access the internet.

It's about holding staff accountable at all levels of tenant service delivery. The Solutions Team is a centralized complaints centre, receiving complaints who then go right back to the regional staff where they originated for a resolution.

I don't entirely agree that complaints are increasing due to tenant engagement. Tenant complaints have existed since the beginning of time and will continue to do so.

Vendor feedback and complaints will be identified through the 6 month Pilot Program based on the top 10 Tenant Issues at the Call Centre. "**Tenant Involvement in In-Unit Repairs**", a report presented to BIFAC on September 8<sup>th</sup> which will help management identify tenant complaints related to specific vendors.

As a recipient of Vendor Services, Tenants have long advocated to have a voice in Vendor Assessments. I did suggest this report come to the TSC as it falls within their mandate, without success.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1) Expand Staff List in all Communities to include Supervisors and Managers of Site Staff to promote faster resolution of complaints at the local level.
  
- 2) Provide TSC with the BIFAC Report "Tenant involvement in In-Unit Repairs" for inclusion on a future agenda.

Thank you for your consideration.

Deputation – Ann-Marie Tomlinson  
Item 8B – Tenant Engagement Refresh Update  
TSC Public Meeting – October 5, 2023

Deputations item 8B

What I think should be added

Tenant rep are an important part of community housing community support piece when it comes to community engagement.

1. That's why I believe it's important for tenant reps to get honorarium for the voluntary work that we do hard-working dedicated work.
2. The amount paid could be every two months every three months, and the standard for payment would be duties. That's already been established by Toronto community housing for reps.
3. In these hard economical times, it would be great for reps to have support and be appreciated for the hard voluntary work that we do in our communities.
4. This document would not be complete without this piece. We have to look at the whole process that includes reps we are an important piece and our insight and contributions to the corporation is important.
5. I would ask the board to please consider us please add this piece to this document, so we feel important and supported.
6. I did talk to [REDACTED] about honorariums did not get back.

Thanks

Ann-Marie Rep duncanwoods community